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FRANCOLINUS L. SCHUBOTZI.

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A RARE FOREST FRANCOLIN

Francolinus lathamii schubotzi

BY DR. V. G. L. VAN SOMEREN

Since the publication of the notes on 'East African and Uganda Francolins' by Sir F. Jackson, in Journal No. 1, vol. i., two very rare and interesting Francolins have been found in Uganda, these are *Francolinus lathamii schubotzi* and *Francolinus nahani*.

There is no record of these birds having been seen or taken previous to my collectors having obtained them in 1913.

Francolinus l. schubotzi was described by Prof. Reichenow as recently as 1912, in *J. Ornith.* ix., p. 320, from specimens collected on the Uelle River in Belgian Congo, and *F. nahani* in 1905 by Dubois, from a single immature specimen, collected on the Ituri river, Belgian Congo. (Dubois, *Ann. Mus. Congo*, i., 1905, p. 17, pl. X.)

In these notes I propose to deal with *F. l. schubotzi*, and with *F. nahani* in the next Journal.

Francolinus lathamii lathamii was known as far back as 1854, when it was described by Hartlaub, its range being confined to Western Africa. The male of the sub-species differs from the typical bird in having the cheeks pure white or delicate pearl-grey; the cordate or circular spots on the under side not so large; and the abdomen white, with black cross-bars. The flanks are brownish with distinct white shaft-streaks outlined with black, and the under tail-coverts black, with white shaft-spots and stripes, and slight barring.

Females differ in practically the same way as do the males, but the most striking difference is the colour of the cheeks, which in this sub-species is reddish-brown, not grey.

Young males resemble the adult males, but are more marbled and more rufous above, while the scapular feathers have ochraceous shaft-stripes.

With regard to the habits of these birds, little is known. They are birds of the dense forests, which fact would account for them being overlooked so long in Uganda.

They are shy and timid, and difficult to procure. Owing to their partiality for the thick forest, these birds do not fly swiftly nor far, but trust to their running powers to avoid pursuit. My head collector reports that the best way to find and keep in touch with these birds is with a good hunting dog.

These birds are usually found in pairs or small coveys. I have not heard them calling, but they are said to utter a low whistling note when feeding amongst the fallen leaves.

Breeding apparently takes place in May and June, during which months females have been collected with swollen ovaries and dilated oviducts. Young birds in first plumage have been shot in September.

So far, the only locality in Uganda where these birds have been taken is in the great Mabira Forest in Chagwe.

The frontispiece, representing male and female, gives one a good idea as to the plumage and form of these birds; a noticeable feature is the slender bill and comparatively short legs.

The colouration of the sexes differs to such an extent as to lead one at a first glance to think that these birds represented different species. The fact that some females possess long spurs also adds to this supposition.

FISHING AT MAFIA ISLAND

BY EDITOR

The waters around Mafia Island have often been highly spoken of as a favourite haunt of game fish. His Excellency the Governor recently had to proceed there on duty with his staff, so he determined to test the locality, and took with him a motor-boat.

At midday on September 24 His Excellency's party anchored some little distance from the island, and at 2.45 commenced